


FACT SHEET

EPA Releases Final Rule Requiring Distribution of Lead Hazard Information Prior to Renovations

ACTION

A new EPA regulation will require renovators, working for compensation, to distribute a pamphlet to owners and occupants of most housing built prior to 1978 before commencing renovation activity. The pamphlet, entitled *Protect Your Family From Lead In Your Home*, discusses ways in which individuals can protect themselves and their families from lead-based paint hazards.

The pre-renovation lead information rule differentiates between renovation activities and excluded activities, such as routine maintenance or repair. Sanding, scraping, and other surface preparation activities that disrupt paint and generate dust are the two key sources of lead exposure during renovation.

Renovation activities that disrupt more than 2 square feet of paint per component will be covered by this rule. A general rule-of-thumb would be to include activities not specifically excluded in the rule, that disturb more than 2 square feet of a painted surface.

Specific exclusions include activities that are less likely to pose a risk of exposure to lead-based paint dust or other lead hazards. Prominent examples are minor housing repairs and maintenance activities, emergency renovation operations (specifically defined in the rule), and renovation activities that take place in housing that has already been determined by a certified inspector to be lead free.

The pre-renovation lead information rule will also require that before renovating common areas (e.g., hallways, stair wells) in multi-family housing, a renovator must inform building residents about the nature and extent of the renovations and make the pamphlet available in a central location.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

In an effort to protect families from exposure to the hazards of lead-based paint, Congress amended the *Toxic Substances Control Act* (TSCA) in 1992 to add Title IV, entitled *Lead Exposure Reduction*. Title IV of TSCA directs EPA to address the general public's risk of exposure to lead-based paint hazards through regulations, education, and other activities. One particular concern of Congress and EPA is the potential lead exposure risks that can occur during renovations of housing containing lead-based paint unless certain safety measures are taken.

Recognizing that many families might be unaware that their homes might contain lead-based paint, section 406(a) of TSCA directed EPA to publish, after notice and comment, a lead hazard information pamphlet providing comprehensive information to the general public on lead-based paint in housing, the risks of exposure, and the precautions for avoiding exposure. Section 406(b) of the law directed EPA to issue regulations requiring that compensated renovators distribute the pamphlet to owners and occupants of most pre-1978 residential housing before beginning renovations (1978 is the year that lead-based paint was banned from residential use).

PURPOSE

People have sometimes created a health hazard for their families without realizing it by disturbing surfaces containing lead-based paint during housing renovations. Activities like scraping, sanding, or using a heat gun on surfaces that contain lead-based paint can release large amounts of lead dust and fumes. Lead dust from renovations can remain in the home long after the work is completed.

EPA is promulgating this pre-renovation lead information rule to ensure that families are fully aware

of the importance of preventative measures to protect housing occupants before beginning renovations in housing that may contain lead-based paint.

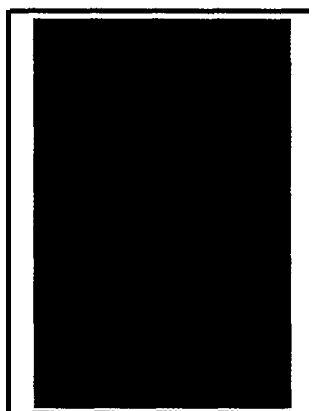
LEAD HAZARDS IN HOUSING

Approximately three quarters of the nation's housing stock contains lead-based paint. When properly managed and maintained, this paint poses little risk. If improperly managed, however, lead from paint can threaten the health of occupants, especially children under 6 years of age. Over time, low-level exposure to lead from paint, dust, and soil can cause a range of health problems including permanent damage to the brain, nervous system and kidneys. In sufficient levels, lead can also cause health problem in adults. Because of its effects on fetal development, lead exposure can also be harmful to pregnant women and women of child-bearing age. Such exposure is largely preventable if individuals take precautionary measures.

PUBLIC COMMENT

EPA published a proposed section 406(b) rule in March 1994. Approximately 30 comments were received in response from such groups as associations representing builders and renovators, State and local health officials, and consumer advocacy groups. The final pre-renovation lead information rule will impose requirements on a large number of businesses and self-employed individuals. While this rule's requirements are minor, its effectiveness is dependent on the regulated community's understanding of their obligations.

LEAD HAZARD PAMPHLET



EPA developed a lead hazard information pamphlet entitled *Protect Your Family From Lead In Your Home*. This pamphlet provides families with prevention tips on reducing exposure to lead hazards from various sources.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For a copy of *Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home* (in English or Spanish) or the rule call the National Lead Information Center at 1-(800) 424-LEAD.

Bulk copies of the pamphlet are available from the Government Printing Office (GPO) at (202) 512-1800. Refer to the complete title or GPO Stock Number 055-000-00507-9. The price is \$26.00 for a pack of 50 copies. Alternatively, persons may reproduce the pamphlet, for use or distribution, providing that the text and graphics are reproduced in full. Camera-ready copies of the pamphlet are available from the National Lead Information Center.

For specific questions about lead-based paint and lead-based paint hazards, call the National Lead Information Center at 1-(800) 424-LEAD.

The EPA pamphlet and rule are available electronically and may be accessed through the Internet at the following URL: <http://www.epa.gov/lead>

EFFECTIVE DATE

June 1, 1999